

## **West End LCI Zoning Workshop #3**

Tuesday, October 28, 2003

7:30 to 9:00 pm

Bill Dunkley, Project Manager

West End Medical Center, 868 York Street, West End

### **MINUTES**

*Prior to this meeting, Bill and Stephanie attended part of the WEND meeting to review the agenda and take comments on the SPI text.*

Meeting called to order at 7:30.

#### **Introductions**

- Bill discussed what zoning can and cannot do.
- The approval process was reviewed- will possibly go to council in February 2004, if we do not have to add any additional community workshops.
- New zoning applies to new development, redevelopment, change of ownership or change of use ONLY. Does not apply to existing businesses or structures.
- The new map incorporates suggestions from the last meeting.
- There will be a walkability workshop on November 6<sup>th</sup> 8:30am-2:00pm.

Volunteers:

- Pam Alieniece
- Ken Reaves
- Michelle Gipson
- Harold Dixon
- Mary Ford
- Joanne Rhone
- The November 11<sup>th</sup> meeting has been postponed due to Veterans Day. The meeting has been rescheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.

#### **Subareas**

- Based on Quality of Life (QOL) districts, then customized.
- Reviewed how we got to this point.
- The study area has lots of assets to build upon.
- The intent of each subarea was explained.
- The “A” & “B” street concept was discussed.
  - Q- Is the 20% commercial in subarea 4 a minimum?
    - R- No, it is a maximum. Minimums are legally difficult. We will review this.
  - C- Good urban design requirements might work to discourage low-income/subsidized housing (which is what the community desires).
  - C- Good examples of mixed-use developments are the Highlands on Ponce, 10<sup>th</sup> & Piedmont, and downtown Decatur. Howell Mill Road development also has nice live/work storefronts.

- Q- Will 5 story buildings destroy the skyline?
  - R- We can look at the sight lines and figure that out.
- Q- Can the Sears block be broken into smaller blocks?
  - R- Zoning requires smaller blocks to help reconstitute the grid. Blocks greater than 800 feet must be broken into block of at least 600 feet.
- C- Investors tend to purchase & rent out small lots. Can we do anything about that?
  - R- We can't force buildings to be owner-occupied.
- Q- Why are we allowing small lots? They don't match existing lot sizes.
  - R- We can go back and look at neighboring lot sizes and try to get the SFSL area to be compatible.
- Q- Has consideration been given to bicycles?
  - R- The zoning requires bike racks in the furniture zone, and the flat terrain encourages biking.

### Map Comments

- Q- Are there any urban design standards on the Village O-I subarea?
  - R- Karen Huebner will discuss this momentarily.
- Live/Work: Should we allow live/work & light industrial at the Candler warehouse site?
  - Q- Does L/W encourage a transient population?
    - R- No- just the opposite because people have their homes and businesses in the same place.
    - R- In Castleberry Hill there is a higher turnover rate in condos/apartments (as opposed to single family homes), however the population tends to be very involved & community oriented.
    - C- One participant's vision for Candler Warehouse is an area similar to Rockefeller Plaza, Colony Square or Universal Studios.
    - R- Live/work wouldn't preclude that.
- A consensus was reached that L/W is good for the subarea.
  - C- The City has no industrial land use plan, which is problematic. Does the existing Candler Warehouse Zoning have to be rescinded before the new zoning takes effect? What about horse & carriage operators who have moved there from Castleberry Hill? Would they be allowed to continue their business? Also, the land in this area isn't very accessible and condos that were built there recently had to be auctioned off.
  - Q- What percentage of the SPI is residential? What percent is owner occupied?
    - R- There are no single-family residential zoning districts within the SPI.
    - R- The district needs to be looked at as a whole. We can look at demographics.
  - C- Adair park residents encourage L/W because the area has languished and any change is good at this point.
  - Q- Does zoning impact police protection?
    - R- No.

- Q- How does someone who doesn't attend community meetings find out about economic development opportunities?
    - R- The Bureau of Planning does some economic development, and other organizations do some as well.
- Should there be L/W on the southern parcels to the east of Lee Street?
  - The community is satisfied with NC there.
  - C- West End needs employment and L/W can help.
- Should the northern part of the MARTA property be O/I?
  - Yes
  - Q- Where will the cars go?
    - R- Underground, in a deck, or somewhere else (not West End residents anyway).
  - C- The alley between Evans & MARTA is in bad condition.
    - R- Bill has an alley fact sheet he can distribute.
  - C- NC should be continued on RDA to Peebles Street.
  - C- Units per acre was part of zoning in 1982. People can relate to that better than they can to FAR.
    - R- We can look at including that in the next version.

### **Historic Preservation**

- The group reviewed the references to historic preservation that were made in the LCI text.
- What does "retain the historic fabric" really mean?
- Karen Huebner gave a brief history of the existing historic district, which was decidedly not applied to commercial areas.
  - In order to determine what is actually historic in the business district, an inventory needs to be done and list of buildings that should not be demolished needs to be made.
  - Maintaining a certain look is different than maintaining specific buildings.
- Where are the historic buildings?
  - South side of RDA, between Lee and Evans/Lowery- 1920's buildings were refaced. The facades need to be refurbished.
  - North side of this area used to have identical storefronts before the mall was built.
  - At Gordon & RDA the bulkheads were removed from a building after a car accident there. They were replaced with glass windows that do not maintain the architectural style or proportions.
  - At Peebles & RDA, the Bankston building storefront is nice.
  - C- The community also wants to protect the neighborhoods further down RDA to prevent "add-on" commercial to residential structures.
    - R- The zoning can be changed to prohibit commercial uses.
  - C- We should go all the way to Langhorn to address the dual sanctuaries issues.
    - R- That is probably too far out of the original LCI study area.
  - Q- Are there non-historic urban design guidelines/standards?
    - NC has quite a bit of that already in it.

- We need to consider whether or not we want to add additional hurdles for developers. They would have to go through the Bureau of Buildings, the Bureau of Planning, and the Urban Design Commission just to get a permit.
  - The community is in favor of this.
  - Developers in the audience are not in favor of this.
  - The original intent of a historic district was to prevent willy-nilly development.
- Historic Issues- What should we maintain/encourage?
  1. Orient buildings to the street/sidewalk
  2. Pedestrian orientation
  3. Storefronts/display windows
  4. Bulkheads
  5. Residences without add-on commercial
  6. Sidewalk dining
  7. Benches
  8. Streetscapes
  9. Parks & plazas
  10. Pedestrian scale lighting
  11. Controlled signage
  12. Bike racks (& vespa parking)
  13. Pedestrian scale buildings (3-4 stories)
  14. Building materials (brick, real stucco, etc.)
  15. Paving materials
  16. On-street parking
  17. Bike paths
  18. Street trees
  19. Adequate sidewalk widths
  20. Traffic calming/narrow streets
  21. Crosswalks & signals
  22. Loading area controls
  23. Curb cut controls
  24. Drive-through controls/management
  25. Functional alleys
  26. Consistent store frontage width (& variety)
  27. Reduced blank walls
  28. Density/height variations
  29. Compatibility/context
  30. Awnings & canopies
- The following items are already addressed in the SPI code:  
1,2,3,8,9,10,12,15,16,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,26,27,29 & 30.
- The remaining items can be examined & possibly incorporated into SPI. We probably do not need historic designation to accomplish what we want.
  - Q- Do Landmark districts get extra police coverage?

- R- No.
- The sign ordinance is separate from the SPI. If the existing ordinance does not meet our needs, we could create one specifically for the SPI.
  - Q- Is the infrastructure adequate for what is in the plan?
    - R- Yes, but we will check on sewer capacity. West End is slated for full sewer separation.
  - Q- Do citywide impervious pavement/retention requirements preclude the zoning ordinances from being followed?
    - R- No. Bad design examples we see are illustrations of how they can be handled when property owners are not required to follow design guidelines.

### **Closing**

- Homework: Please look through the suggestion list and contact Bill if you have a problem with anything.
- The meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.